

REMARKS

Claims 1-15, all the claims pending in the application, stand rejected. Claims 1, 4-8 and 15 are amended to overcome the rejections and objections and to better state the features of the present invention.

Specifically, with regard to the language in the claims directed to the mounting plate, Applicant notes that this plate does not always mount the interrupter and the disconnecter. Therefore, Applicant has changed this portion of claim 7 and 15 to "a mounting plate for selectively mounting thereon the interrupter and the disconnecter with the grounding switch".

Also, as for the support of the disconnecter by the insulating frame, Applicant has changed the language to the effect that a movable element (a movable contact blade) of the disconnecter is supported solely by the insulating frame.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner asserts that the IDS filed on January 12, 2007 lacked a copy of Utility Model laid open 62-88408. A copy of the abstract alone was provided.

Applicants are providing a copy from the JPO website with this response to the outstanding Office Action. Applicants apologize for any inconvenience due to the inadvertent omission.

Specification

The additions to the specification that were made in the previous Amendment are objected to by the Examiner as adding new matter. In particular, the addition of language specifying that "the disconnecter and a movable rod of said vacuum switch tube are electronically connected to each other" is noted by the Examiner not to have support in the original disclosure.

First, the term "electronically" was erroneously typed and should have been "electrically." A correction has been made to the specification and claims in this regard.

Second, in submitting the amended description, Applicant asserted that the phrase "between their movable rods" was a mistranslation. Applicants asserted that the Figures clearly show that the disconnecter and the movable rod of the vacuum switch are electrically connected together. Thus, no new matter is added.

Applicant submits that an electrical connection would be clear from the original disclosure. According to the disclosure, there is a movable element (a movable contact blade) of the disconnecter, which clearly has an electrical function. The schematic representations of the rod 18 and disconnecter 10b clearly show the electrical connection of the two components, as would be understood by one skilled in the art.

Claim Objections

Claims 7 and 15 are objected to because they claim open ended clauses, such as “can be.” The language is changed in the accompanying claims and should now be acceptable to the Examiner.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 112

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

The Examiner asserts that in reciting that “the disconnecter and moveable rod are electrically connected to each other,” new matter is added. As already noted this issue arose due to a mistyping of “electrically” and with the correction of the error, should now be resolved.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Quenin et al (EP 0, 924 827). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claims 1 and 2

As to claims 1 and 2, Applicants previously argued that amended claim 1 is patentable over Quenin et al for several reasons.

First, the cited disconnecter (isolator) 18 is at least partly supported (see pin 32 on 27) by the operating mechanism 27 of the vacuum switch 14. Such support cannot be provided when there is no vacuum switch. In the present invention as defined by claim 1, the disconnecter 10b is supported only by the insulating frame 17, and the vacuum switch tube 6 is mounted to the insulating frame 17 only when it is needed according to the application.

Second, the electrical connection between the disconnecter 18 and the vacuum switch 14

is established by the fixed contact 40 of the vacuum switch 14 connected to the disconnecter 18 via the links 24 and 26. Further, the movable operating rod 18 of the vacuum switch tube 6 is connected to the disconnecter via the flexible conductor, which provides an electrical connection.

These features of the invention allow the selected, necessary electrical equipment to be selectively contained within the tank to make modules. Thus, the invention of claim 1 is patentable.

In the Response to Arguments at page 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that the Applicant's arguments "are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection." However, the arguments still are valid with respect to the rejection on the basis of Quenin et al. The Examiner's rejection has not changed and is clearly overcome by Applicant's previous amendments and arguments. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection based on Quenin et al should be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 4

With respect to claims 3 and 4, the Examiner continues to assert that Quenin et al illustrates in Fig. 7 a plurality of gas insulated switch gear modules within a tank 54 that is hermetically filled with an insulating gas. The Examiner asserts that the upper module accommodates a disconnecter 18, switches and a vacuum switch 14, and the bottom module accommodates components 20, 50 and 48, connected to each other by a spacer 56, 58.

Applicants asserted that all of the figures in Quenin et al illustrate only a single module. There are no illustrations or teachings of plural stacked modules. Thus, the insulators 56, 58 are for separating a fuse structure from the switch module and not for separating two similar switching modules. The amended claims that state that the hermetic seal is between "adjacent tanks" would distinguish over the cited reference.

Again Applicant notes that in the Response to Arguments at page 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that the Applicants arguments "are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. However, the arguments still are valid with respect to the rejection on the basis of Quenin. The Examiner's rejection has not changed and is clearly overcome by Applicants

previous amendments and arguments. Thus, Applicants would respectfully submit that this rejection based on Quenin et al should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by the newly cited reference to Hiramoto et al (JP/2000-228,806). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claims 1 and 2

As to claims 1 and 2, the Examiner asserts that Hiramoto discloses in Fig. 6 a gas-insulated switchgear having at least one switch gear module with vertically stacked breakers 5 and disconnectors 4A, each breaker 5 having a grounding switch with touchdown disconnector structures 18A, 18B, insulated frame 7A, 7B for supporting a vacuum switch tube 5c, and interrupter 17B.

The Examiner asserts that the disconnector 4A and tube 5c are connected between the moveable rods 26, 30 (Fig. 4), and thereby satisfy the limitation that “said disconnector and a movable rod of said vacuum switch tube are connected to each other.” The Examiner asserts that this connection is inherent since the rods are linked together to prevent the disconnector from opening when the vacuum switch is closed.

First, Applicant notes that element 30 is a spring and not a rod, as disclosed at paragraph [0085]. The combination of gears and rotatable rods, generally labeled as 24A-G and 26A-B, are explained with respect to Figs. 3 and 4 beginning at paragraph [0072] and act to operate blades 28. Notably, these rods are not “linearly moved”.

Second, the Examiner gives no patentable weight to the limitation defining the electrical connection between the disconnector 10b and the moveable rod 18 of the vacuum switch. In Hiramoto et al, the disconnector and a moveable rod do not appear to be electrically connected, and the burden is on the Examiner to demonstrate such connection.

On the basis of the foregoing distinctions, Applicant would respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 4

With respect to claims 3 and 4, the Examiner asserts that Hiramoto in Fig. 6 discloses a plurality of switchgear modules having a tank (3 vertically stacked modules), where the adjacent tanks are connected via a spacer hermetically connecting the tanks to define a circuit. The illustration in Fig. 6 does show vertically stacked modules and the discussion at paragraph [0116] mentions the existence of air-tight bulkheads that divide switch gear compartments and may serve as the claimed “spacer hermetically connecting said adjacent tanks.” Patentability of these two claims at least would be based on the arguments given for parent claim 1.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103

Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Quenin et al (EP 0, 924 827) in view of Tsurza et al (6,515,247). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

As to claims 9 and 10, the Examiner asserts that Quenin et al illustrates all of the claim limitations, but for the lightning arrester. The Examiner asserts that Tsurza et al discloses in Fig. 1 a gas insulated switch gear within a lightning arrester 32.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are patentable on the basis of the arguments and amendments made with respect to the parent claims.

In the Response to Arguments at page 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that the Applicant’s arguments “are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. However, the arguments still are valid with respect to the rejection on the basis of Quenin. The Examiner’s rejection has not changed and is clearly overcome by Applicants previous amendments and arguments. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn for purposes of appeal.

Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiramoto et al (JP/2000-228,806) in view of Tsurza et al (6,515,247). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

As to claims 9 and 10, the Examiner asserts that Hiramoto et al illustrates all of the claim limitations, but for the lightning arrester. The Examiner asserts that Tsurza et al discloses in Fig. 1 a gas insulated switch gear within a lightning arrester 32.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims would be patentable on the basis of the arguments and amendments made with respect to the parent claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-8 and 11-14 appear to be considered allowable, presumably if the basis for objection and rejection are removed. On the basis of Applicant's amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims now should be allowed.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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